



A VISIT WITH MARC LEPAIN, PH.D., ASSUMPTION COLLEGE

There are a few, if any in the Assumption family, who have been as long a faithful friend of the college and the Assumptionists than Dr. Marc LePain, professor of theology.

Born in Southbridge, MA, one of two boys and sons of a pharmacist, Marc grew up in Notre Dame Parish. It is interesting to note that in 1904, the pastor, Msgr. Brochu, had been a generous benefactor of Assumption College. Over the years, Marc's family saw at least 2 dozen relatives attend the college. So it was not surprising, that after attending the prep, he followed in their footsteps. In a family of so many Assumption graduates, Fr. Wilfrid Dufault, Marc's uncle, was a significant influence.

After graduation in 1965, Marc continued his studies at the University of Pennsylvania where he earned a master's degree in French in 1967 and taught at the high school level for one year. Subsequently, he earned a Ph.D. in theology at Fordham University with a concentration in world religions. A major opportunity then presented itself in Marc's life when in 1971 an opening occurred at Assumption to teach world religions. As they say, 'the rest is history.'

While a student at Assumption, Marc met his future wife Patty. Today, after 21 years of marriage, they have 4 adopted children, 5 grandchildren with another expected soon.

When asked about his courses at Assumption, the teacher in Marc lit up recalling students who

have come into his life over the years, as he taught “Asian Traditions,” the “Basic Course on the Bible” and “Foundations of Western Civilization” for the theology and philosophy departments.

In reflecting on his years of teaching, Marc noted that the students of today come with little doctrinal knowledge and many misconceptions of religion in general and the scriptures in particular. He views this reality as the result of the influence of media, their parents and the views of our culture and society which are not helpful and sometimes detrimental.

Looking back on 42 years of teaching, Marc has seen and still believes deeply in the importance of friendships/relationships which nurture and promote growth in the lives of students during the formative 4 years of college. Secondly, through his teaching, it has been important for him to present with great vigor, the outstanding minds of the Church, rooted in her tradition, like Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, John Paul II and Benedict XVI, as they foster intellectual growth over time.

With regard to the broader college community at Assumption, Marc is particularly grateful for the many rich opportunities for the faculty’s academic advancement, namely through reading groups, lectures and other programmatic offerings.

As this new Spring semester of 2012 begins, Marc is looking forward to some sabbatical time during which he will translate the most recent and third book of the French political philosopher, Pierre Manent, who is still teaching in Paris. Having been first introduced to his works 30 years ago and having translated his two previous books, Marc welcomes the challenge of this project which will be completed by 2013 and published by Harvard Divinity Press.

Looking ahead to the future, after many years in partnership with the Assumptionists both personally and professionally, Marc sees signs of hope in furthering Fr. d’Alzon’s dream and mission for the congregation through the rich diversity of new members and the far reaching efforts of globalization. While never many in members, the Augustinians of the Assumption have a vast network of missions and are very visible and effective in proclaiming the coming of God’s Kingdom through their charism of simplicity, their family spirit and hospitality. They continue to gift the Church through their doctrinal proclamation, ecumenical and interreligious endeavors and their social outreach to the poor. In Marc’s own words, “It was the Providence of God that brought me to Assumption!”